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# WHAT PRICE UNIFORMITY?

By William F. Buckley, Jr.

The graduation ritual at the nation's private preparatory schools will be much the same as last year, and the year before. The Glee Club will sing, the valedictorian will talk about America in this troubled age, the football captain will be awarded a cup, the headmaster will amiably spoof the graduating class, and then commend its contributions to the school, and the visiting speaker will talk about great responsibilities.

And the whole show will be unabashedly public. Not everybody is invited, of course, but lots of people are — parents, alumni, benefactors, and the leading citizens of the town. All in all, a generous amount of fol-de-rol.

However, if James B. Conant, President of Harvard University, is right, the innocent appearing ceremony ought to go underground. There shouldn't be anything brassy to commemorate the intellectual puberty of a regiment of young men and women who, by virtue of their education in private schools, promise to introduce into our society "divisive" and undemocratic influences.

That's what they're going to do, insisted Dr. Conant, in a speech before the American Association of School Administrators, last April. We can only achieve unity, he said, "if our public schools remain the primary vehicle for the education of our youth, and if as far as possible all the youth of a community attend the same school irrespective of family fortune or cultural background . . . there is some reason to fear lest a dual system of secondary education . . . come to threaten the democratic unity provided by our public schools . . ."

Now the American people are not, as a general rule, given to talking back to educators, especially those who occupy such exalted posts as Dr. Conant's. We've been taught better. Education is good. More education is better. If education is good, it is because it teaches us things. More education teaches us more things. Hence, the more education, the more we know, the sounder our judgment, and the less we ought to be contradicted. Dr. Conant has had great gobs of education. His advice ought to be worth taking.

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Still, some undisciplined folk are inclined to tell Dr. Conant to go take a ride on Charon's Ferry. They simply don't agree that private education is necessarily divisive and undemocratic, and they're not particularly interested in fostering the sort of unity Dr. Conant is probably interested in. In short, they want to know why Dr. Conant is attacking private education. What are the motives that conditioned his extraordinary attitude — especially since the record is clear that graduates of private schools, Dr. Conant included, have made and continue to make striking contributions to our society?

It doesn't help to read Dr. Conant's full statement, which treats mostly of the advantages of mixing the rich and the poor, the Catholics and the Jews, and the artists and the farmers. All of us agree that this is good, though perhaps rejecting Dr. Conant's intimations that this is the highest value of education; yet none of us has spotted any marked intolerance coming out of private schools — no more, for example, than what comes out of the public schools.

Nor are we convinced that there is less stratification within a public high school than in a private school. So why should a man whose most casual asides shake the educational world come out and say such unfriendly things about the men and women who support private schools and send their children there?

The answer is that Dr. Conant, along with some powerful educational confreres, is out to fashion society in his own mold. This isn't a well-kept secret. It's not a secret at all. The most influential educators of our time — John Dewey, William Kilpatrick, George Counts, Harold Rugg, and the lot — have come right out and talked about what they're planning to do over the past thirty years.

They are out to build a New Social Order. And with a realism startling in a group of long-hairs, they have set about their job in the most effective way. They don't dissipate their efforts on such frivolities as national elections (though they do this incidentally); they work with far more fundamental social matter, the student. Through national educational associations, through teachers' colleges, and through textbooks and other literature, they reach out and influence the remotest classroom.

The chagrined and frustrated parent has very little luck opposing the advances of the New Social Order. Anytime a citizen feels like objecting to the orientation of the educational program of his local school, he collides with the iron curtain of academic freedom. "The consumer has no rights in the educational marketplace", Professor Henry Steele Commager puts it. Translated, this means that a parent has no right to seek reform regardless of the extent to which he disapproves of the net impact of the education of the local school. The educator, in short, has consolidated his position as the exclusive, irresponsible regent of education. *L'ecole,* he says — *c'est moi.*

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EVEN WITH ACADEMIC freedom established, certain obstacles remain. There's not enough room in education for the New Social Order *and* religion. The New Order is philosophically wedded to the doctrine that the test of truth is its ability to win acceptance by the majority. Economically, the new order is egalitarian; politically, it is majoritarian; emotionally, it is infatuated with the State, the unchallengeable and irreproachable steward of every human being.

It clearly won't do, obviously, to foster within such schools a respect for an absolute, intractable, unbribable God, a Divine Intelligence who is utterly unconcerned with other people's versions of truth, and inattentive to majority opinion. It won't do to tolerate a competitor for the allegiance of man. The State prefers to secure monopoly for itself. It's intolerably divisive to have both God *and* the State scrapping for disciples on certain issues on which their views might differ.

Religion, then, must go. First of all, we must expose it as a not-very-serious intellectual and emotional avocation. (Viz., the famous 1945 Harvard Report's dismissal of religion: ". . . we did not feel justified in proposing religious instruction as a part of the curriculum . . . whatever one's views, religion is not now for most colleges a practicable source of intellectual unity.")

Next, we must prove that to allow religion to be taught in public schools imminently commits us to uniting Church and State (viz., the McCollum decision of the Supreme Court). Having paved the way, we can rely on the results. If religion is given no place at all — or just token recognition — in the intellectual diet of the school, the growing generation will probably come to think of it as, to quote Canon Bernard Iddings Bell, "an innocuous pastime, preferred by a few to golf or canasta".

THE FIGHT IS BEING WON! Academic freedom is entrenched. True, there have been a few setbacks, as for example, the "fascistic" episode in Pasadena, where the citizenry booted out its school superintendent; but considering the public chastisement extended to the citizens involved, it's not likely that the incidence of this sort of uprising will increase.

*But there remains an enemy.* A Trojan Horse stands resolutely in the way of a uniform evolution towards the New Order. The private schools (outnumbered 10-1 by public schools) are still measurably independent, even though various conformist pressures are, of course, exerted by college administrators, who wield a decisive sanction — the power to refuse to matriculate the preparatory school's graduate. So long as these schools (and colleges) survive, the public education monolith is threatened.

The existence of these disruptive private schools clearly looms as a matter of the first urgency, and the question arises, how best to do away with them? The modern mind turns automatically to the State to do a job. Why not outlaw private schools? Dr.

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Conant is too realistic. The American mind is not yet conditioned to such heavy-handed Federal action. Other means must be found to accomplish the same thing.

Private schools are supported by private money. So why not expropriate private money? This is the surest way to bankrupt the private school. The war of attrition is already succeeding. The private colleges are in desperate shape. And they are masochists of the first order; they urge upon their students the evils of private property, and the glories of egalitarianism. Quite predictably, these students graduate to urge higher and higher taxation on their political representatives, who comply by absorbing a greater and greater percentage of individual income, thus making less and less of it available for the maintenance of private colleges. The next step, clearly, is for our government to rush in with various species of Federal grants to keep the schools from perishing.

But, if "public" money is used to support an educational institution, certain requirements must be fulfilled. No religious courses, of course, else you marry the church to the state. And nothing too unkind about the State itself, as this would be churlish ingratitude. Nor may the school indulge itself in its own admissions policy. In short, the acceptance of Federal grants means the surrender of the school's independence.

Alongside an economic war against the private schools, a propaganda assault must be staged. The schools must be discredited. The movement to discredit them began, indirectly, a long time ago. The philosophers of egalitarianism and class hatred started to hack away at "private schools for young fobs". The psychological groundwork is laid, and the time is ripe for the direct onslaught. This time, not just against the people who support the schools, or the students who attend them, *but against the institutions themselves.* For they produce disunity and autocracy. They are a threat to our New Social Order.

SOME DAY, those Americans who believe in freedom are going to realize that they cannot indefinitely withstand the assaults of the State-lovers by restricting their defensive action to genteel parries. This is what we've been doing.

Way before Dr. Conant came out with his dirge about private schools, some responsible spokesman of freedom should have come out with a different observation about education. On the premise that every individual in our society ought to enjoy maximum freedom, which includes the freedom to superintend the education of his children, the suggestion ought to be made that every State rebate to the citizen who seeks private education, that percentage of the State's educational budget that is earmarked for his public education. In short, we ought to adjust our thinking to devise ways and means of encouraging the *proliferation* of private schools, as the last, best bulwark against the monolith of the new, secular, statist social order.

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# HUMAN EVENTS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor* FRANK CHODOROV, *Associate Editor*

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**"Ike Cannot Win":** The blitz, confidently anticipated by Eisenhower supporters and feared by Taft people, failed to materialize at Abilene and in the days thereafter. Today, one prominent Democratic official remarked to us: "Ike is almost off the front page."

Does that mean Eisenhower hopes have foundered completely? Not at all. Both Ike and Taft have gone into the series of private conferences with delegates and party leaders. Ike headquarters say that their candidate will be at his best in these very personal meetings. He will. But one question intrigues observers in this skeptical capital — will he be good enough? It is a fair one. Since the disappointing opening at Abilene, since the expected onrush of popular sentiment for Ike failed to take place, Ike meets these gentlemen minus the card by which he hoped to take the rubber. These stony-hearted gentlemen want to win in November.

As a matter of fact, it is gradually dawning on the professional GOP politicians that they have been wasting too much time pondering the cry, "Taft can't win in November", and that they should have been examining quite another thesis, "Ike can't win in November".

What literally hits them in the eye is the fact that, since the day of Ike's return and commencement of his campaign in this country, Taft has picked up a total of 52 delegates and Ike one, thus: South Dakota — 14; District of Columbia — 6; Virginia — 2 additional; Indiana — 30. One delegate was allotted Ike in the Hoosier state. It isn't a brilliant showing for the General.

But wholly apart from these significant scores, more basic and long range political considerations, now under review by GOP leaders, have come to the fore.

Sentiment against Ike among voters of German stock undoubtedly helped the Taft victory in South Dakota. Such voters associate the General with the Carthaginian peace imposed on Germany, with Morgenthau and his plan, and with the heartless exiling of some 200,000 Germans to Russia for slave labor. (See our article "Ike and the Germans" on May 7.) Taft speakers mentioned these matters in the campaign in South Dakota. But, in the opinion of observers on the ground, the Taft oratory only barely scratched the surface of a vast reservoir of feeling, which is by no means confined to South Dakota, but covers the entire Middle West.

The question staring the GOP delegates in the face is: how far would the Democratic Party exploit the same sentiment next fall, if Ike were the Republican nominee? The answer is — plenty and with great ruthlessness.

But, an equally ominous shadow appears when they consider another racial bloc, in recent years an important electoral factor: the Polish vote. This group has been largely Democratic, but reportedly is ready to break away this year.

Now, the word which politicians receive is that the great majority of Poles would not vote for Eisenhower, if nominated, for the following reasons:

(1) General Bor-Komorowski, the great hero of the Polish armies, called on Eisenhower after the war. He found that Ike had one autographed photo on his desk, and one only — a portrait of Stalin. Bor has talked much and bitterly about this, and his words have spread throughout the Polish community.

(2) Ike received from Soviet Russia the Order of Suvarov. Now, the famous Russian general Suvarov is one of the great villains of Polish histories, because of his butchery of Poles; his name is to the Poles what Cromwell's is to the Irish.

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(3) Ike, as President of Columbia University, accepted a $15,000 grant from the Communist Government of Poland, to set up a chair of Polish literature. A great deal has been made of this in the Polish-American press. Ike is blamed.

(4) Whereas Taft is on the record in the most forthright way against the Yalta agreement (which carved up Poland and committed that country to Russian hegemony and Communist domination), Ike at Abilene was not sufficiently positive in his reference to Yalta to satisfy Polish-American feelings.

(5) Eisenhower after the war visited Warsaw and received a decoration from the Communist puppet government, hated by all Poles in this country.

Now, some of the above objections are probably unfair to Ike; he possibly meant no offense to the Poles in taking these decorations. Nevertheless, the Polish-Americans nurse these grievances against Eisenhower. This situation imposes a great handicap on a proposed candidate whose friends claim that they can win such groups as the Poles away from the Democrats. And, if Ike were nominated, it is certain that the highly able Democratic propaganda machine would play up these grievances to the limit.

In short, the German vote, the Polish vote, and other developing considerations make many of the men who will man the delegation to the GOP convention in Chicago feel that Ike might not, after all, prove such a sure winner if nominated. The legend, so strenuously propagated by Ike enthusiasts, that Ike if nominated on any ticket could surely sweep the country, is fading rapidly.

**German Treaty:** Secretary Acheson wants the Senate to hurry up and ratify the German Treaty (or rather treaties) recently initialed in Europe with much fanfare. He has apparently communicated his impatience to Senator George, who is adjuring his colleagues to hurry up and vote approval by next week. The Senator says there's no opposition. So why not make haste. A few Senators protested that they should at least read the documents. But they found difficulty in getting copies from the State Department. "If you don't send one up right away", roared one legislator, "I'll go and get one from the German Embassy."

Why the rush for ratification? We have noted the following interesting passage in the London *New Statesman and Nation* for May 17. That weekly's Paris correspondent wrote, quoting the Paris daily *Le Monde*: " 'The only immediate advantage of the initialing ceremony is to strengthen the electoral position of the European candidates in the U.S.' Once the election is over, 'the European parliaments may no longer find it necessary to hurry with the ratification of the treaty.' " We should thank the French for being frank. "European candidates in the U.S." — as a description of Eisenhower, Harriman and Kefauver! And note the leisurely attitude towards ratification. "Let it wait until next November, and then we'll think about it."

**China Lobby:** Senator Harry Cain (R., Wash.) has introduced into the Congressional Record (June 6) what should be the treatise on the China Lobby to end all treatises on the China Lobby. It runs to 73 pages of the Record and contains probably all of the extant documents on this subject. If those who profess to believe there has been a real China Lobby (a lobby lavishly financed by the Chiang Kai-shek Government) want to argue the subject, they will have to deal with this material.

For a long time, most observers in Washington have discounted the existence of the China Lobby, as described in the left-wing press. When a lobby is working hard and has lots of money to spend, newspapermen soon become conscious of the fact. No one we know has been bothered by phone calls, invitations to parties or great packets of propaganda coming out of the Chiang Embassy here. As for money, an examination of expenses of information services conducted by foreign governments shows the following breakdown: British Information Services — $868,343; Netherlands Information Bureau — $210,371; Yugoslavia Information Center — $187,582; Israel Information Office — $94,821; China News Service — $77,972. The figures speak for themselves.

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Yet, the agitation among leftist members of Congress and publications rose some months ago to the point where a resolution, sponsored by Sen. Morse (R., Ore.), darling of the State Department, provided for a probe of the "China Lobby". Other Republican Senators strongly backed the idea with the proviso that all lobbying, left and right, on the matter of China be investigated, and indeed all foreign lobbying in general. Months have passed and nothing has been done. Why has this resolution apparently died aborning?

According to Sen. Cain in his speech, the real reason is that what Chinese money was distributed went to friends of the Administration, to Democrats, rather than to "reactionary" lobbyists. He pointed out that naturally foreign governments, whether "reactionary" or "liberal" would go to friends of the Administration with their fees and retainers; for the latter's influence would be stronger. "A golden Niagara of money, sweated out of the hides of American citizens, was pouring into the foreign aid trough, and many a tired New Dealer refreshed himself at this fountain of currency", said Cain. "If an investigation into this matter were pressed, it might prove embarrassing not only to such persons as Robert Nathan, Oscar Cox and O. John Rogge [all former New Deal officials]. It might even disturb a very active person, Mr. Clark Clifford [former White House aide, now representing big firms in the Capital] . . . It might conceivably in some way, embarrass Mr. Acheson's old law firm of Covington, Burling, Rublee, O'Brian and Shorb . . . To admit that this troupe of dedicated uplifters were pushing and shoving at the public trough would not be seemly."

**Congress Strikes Back:** We recently noted in this column how the President attacked the private electric power industry and threatened another witch hunt along the lines of that conducted by the late Congressman Buchanan. But Congress struck back, after correctly perceiving that the President was employing the strategy of "the best defense is the offense". He had, indeed, something that needed high-powered defense.

For members of Congress saw that the "Electric Consumers Conference" which Truman addressed was a publicity stunt to put over more public ownership of utilities. It has been slowly dawning on many people that the people have to pay big taxes and then some, for TVA's. One of the groups on which this idea has had effects has been no less than organized labor. The Utility Workers of America (CIO) passed a resolution opposing the "encroachment" of Big Government in the private utility business, saying: "The most favorable conditions of employment for workers in the industry can be secured through collective bargaining in an investor-owned utility."

Congressman Dondero (R., Mich.) pointed out that the private power business is "a goldfish-bowl", amply scrutinized by public bodies. But, he thought, it was about time for Congress to look into the motives, sincerity and financing of the vested interests in Federal ownership, "in view of the general feeling that this alleged conference was a publicity stunt". He assailed the pressure group of "electric consumers" as one interested in preserving "rights and privileges of enjoying tax-free status in relations to their electric light bills". Persons who receive the benefits of public power "enjoy a tax-free status" while "you and I and all the other 80 per cent of the people" who do not have this status "make up the difference in the electric light bill out of their own pockets in federal taxes".

Thereupon, Dondero introduced a resolution in the House to "investigate the so-called Electric Consumers Conference". If this investigation is pushed, it will establish a precedent, long lacking in Washington, for probing bureaucratic methods of extending Federal power.

**Bond Business:** Last week, the government told about its attempt to sell its new 2¾ per cent "savings" bonds — not purchasable by banks and other financial institutions. The offering began on May 19, and closed on May 29. During these ten days, the "savers" subscribed for $1,757,759,000 worth of the bonds. Since the government had on its shelves at the beginning of the sale a total of $14,747,000,000 worth, the result was correctly described as a "flop" by financial journals.

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The sale, from the point of view of the Treasury, was a "test". The officials were looking for a price at which these bonds would be attractive to the public. Now they know. The public is not giving its money to the government for a measly 2¾ per cent.

What is the "right" price? That will vary from time to time, depending on what people think their money is worth and how "good" they think government bonds are. As more and more "savings" bonds become due, the value of replacement issues must drop; the value of anything is in proportion to the supply. Over fifty billion dollars' worth of E, F and G bonds mature in the next ten years. It's a good guess that the government will have to meet the price paid by any good industrial bond, which is much above 2¾ per cent. But, such an increase will add to the tremendous cost of "servicing" the national debt; and that may require either selling more bonds or printing more money. In either case, the value of the bonds would depreciate. It's a rat race.

Of course, the government can drop the effort to sell "savings" bonds and issue paper to the banks in return for whatever cash they have in their vaults, their own or their depositors'. The banks are in no position to refuse. However, the banks can turn the bonds pushed on them into cash, by a mere bookkeeping transaction, and that means inflation, which is a government headache.

About the only moot question is — who on earth wants the job of running the finances of the U.S. Government for the next ten years?

**Democrats:** We asked a prominent Democratic Senator, "For how long should I reserve an hotel room for the Democratic convention next month in Chicago? Four or five days?" He replied, "Not less than ten days to be safe."

And he proceeded to emphasize that his party is just as split as the Republicans (a point too little stressed in the press). One positive factor emerged from his sketch of what might happen. However the other candidates — Kefauver, Harriman, Kerr and maybe Stevenson — fare as the balloting proceeds, Senator Russell's following of about 300 delegates should remain "solid" up to the last. One can imagine the firm phalanx of Confederates holding the Chickahominy, with the Yankees divided.

To this picture, our reaction was — shades of Madison Square Garden in 1924 when, with McAdoo pitted against Al Smith, it took two weeks and 103 ballots to settle on a weak compromise candidate! He was John W. Davis "of Wall Street, West Virginia", as H. L. Mencken described him.

**Between Covers:** General Albert C. Wedemeyer describes the new pamphlet "May God Forgive Us" as "the most comprehensive and objective treatment of the complex situation in the Far East that I have yet read". The author of the pamphlet is Robert H. W. Welch, Jr., Boston businessman. Published by Henry Regnery Company, 20 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago 4, Illinois. Price, $.35.

—— On the stands now is a new cheap edition of Ayn Rand's individualistic novel, *The Fountainhead*. A Signet book, triple volume, $.75. The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 501 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.

—— The newsletter *Counterattack* (55 West 42nd Street, New York 36, N. Y.) in its issue of June 6, raises the question whether radio and TV networks may not soon be required by law to hire subversives. They cite a recent petition filed by the American Civil Liberties Union charging four networks with blacklisting performers and other persons on political grounds. The ACLU petitioned the Federal Communications Commission to refuse renewal of the licenses of the networks unless they stopped blacklisting of such persons.

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